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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

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EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY SISCO

FOLLOWING SENT SECSTATE WASHDC FROM ATHENS 07 JUN 73:

QUOTE ATHENS 3727

EXDIS

FOR SECRETARY & ASS' T SECY SISCO

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT GR

SUBJECT: APPROACH TO GOG RE CONDITIONS FOR PLEBISCITE

1. AS WE HAVE ALREADY REPORTED, THERE ARE BOTH
POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ELEMENTS IN RELATION TO IMPLEMENTATION
OF PRIME MINISTER' S STATEMENT OF JUNE 1. FOR PRESENT, INTEREST
CENTERS IN ARRANGEMENTS SURROUNDING JULY PLEBISCITE. KEY
QUESTION OF NATURE OF PLEBISCITE-- WHETHER IT WILL INVOLVE
CHOICE BETWEEN REPUBLIC AND MONARCHY,-- EXTEND TO ELECTION
OF PRIME MINISTER AS PRESIDENT, OR SIMPLY REQUEST APPROVAL
OF SPECIFIC CHANGES IN CONSTITUTION-- PROBABLY WILL NOT
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BE ANSWERED IMMEDIATELY. IN INTERIM, HOWEVER, CONSIDERABLE INTEREST, BOTH IN GREECE AND ABROAD, CENTERS ON CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH PLEBISCITE WILL BE CONDUCTED. TO DATE WE UNDERSTAND SOME 700 MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES HAVE ALREADY EXPRESSED THEIR INTENTION TO COME TO GREECE FOR PLEBISCITE. AS EMBASSY OBSERVED IN ATHENS 3593, IF ANY POSITIVE RESULTS ARE TO FLOW FROM PLEBISCITE IT MUST BE CARRIED FORWARD UNDER REASONABLY FREE CONDITIONS. POINTS RAISED IN THIS CONNECTION INCLUDE LIFTING OF MARTIAL LAW, FREEDOM OF ORGANIZATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES, PARTICIPATION IN THE ELECTIONS AS RIGHT OF EVERY GREEK CITIZEN, SOME RESOLUTION OF DIFFICULT ISSUE OF ARBITRARY ARRESTS, MALTREATMENT AND PROMPT TRIAL OF POLITICAL PRISONERS, AND FREEDOM OF PRESS REPORTING ON ELECTIONS.

2. I WOULD HOPE THAT SECRETARY, IN CONNECTION WITH ANY CONVERSATIONS HE MAY HAVE WITH ALTERNATE FONMIN CAVALIERATOS AT COPENHAGEN NATO MINISTERIAL MEETING COULD AMONG OTHER THINGS MAKE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. USG PLEASED TO NOTE GOG DECIDED TO SET AN APPROXIMATE DATE IN 1974 FOR PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS. US ALSO OBSERVES THAT JULY 1973 PLEBISCITE INTENDED TO GIVE GREEK PEOPLE MONARCHY TO REPUBLIC. IN CONTEXT OF SECRETARY'S COMMENTS ON FUTURE GREEK ELECTIONS, HE COULD MAKE POINT THAT IT WILL BE INCUMBENT UPON THE GOG TO DEMONSTRATE BY WORD AND DEED THAT BOTH THE PLEBISCITE AND THE ELECTIONS WILL BE CONDUCTED IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE CHOICE FOR THE GREEK PEOPLE WILL BE A FREE ONE. THIS WILL BE THE CRUCIAL FACTOR IN WHETHER OR NOT THIS LONG-AWAITED STEP WILL HAVE THE MUTUALLY DESIRED EFFECT OF HEALING THE BREACHES IN NATO COHESIVENESS, AS WELL AS OF LESSENING SUBSTANTIALLY THE PROBLEM THAT THE ABSENCE OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN GREECE HAS CAUSED IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS, AS WELL AS IN NATO. MAJORITY SENTIMENT FAVORS SUCH ELECTORAL FREEDOM.

B. IN ORDER FOR WESTERN OPINION TO BE PERSUADED THAT THE GREEK PEOPLE ARE EXERCISING GENUINE FREEDOM OF CHOICE, QUESTIONS WILL ARISE CONCERNING THE CONTINUED MAINTENANCE OF MARTIAL LAW IN ATHENS-PIRAEUS AREA, FREEDOM OF ORGANIZATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES, PARTICIPATION IN THE ELECTIONS AS AN

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INALIENABLE RIGHT OF EVERY GREEK CITIZEN REGARDLESS OF WHAT HIS PARTICULAR VIEWS MAY BE, THE NUMBER OF DETAINEES HELD ON POLITICAL GROUNDS, THE ELIMINATION OF ANY IMPRESSION OF ARBITRARY ARRESTS OR MALTREATMENT OF POLITICAL PRISONERS IN ORDER TO INFLUENCE OR EVEN INTIMIDATE THE ELECTORATE, AND FREEDOM OF BOTH DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN PRESS REPORTING IN GREECE. U. S. WOULD HOPE GOG HAS THESE QUESTIONS AND NEED

FOR SATISFACTORY ANSWERS TO THEM IN MIND IN CONNECTION WITH ITS OWN FUTURE PLANNING.

3. I WOULD ALSO PROPOSE AT SOMEWHAT LATER DATE TO PASS THESE SAME THOUGHTS ON MYSELF TO THE PRIME MINISTER, IN APPROPRIATE WAY, NOTING SOME OF IMPERATIVES WE SEE IF HE IS TO RESOLVE EFFECTIVELY THROUGH HOLDING REASONABLY FREE ELECTIONS GREECE'S PROBLEMS OF ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND DEFENSE RELATIONS WITH WESTERN EUROPE AND U. S.

4. AT SOME POINT WE MIGHT ALSO WISH TO CONSIDER DESIRABILITY OF LETTER FROM PRESIDENT TO PRIME MINISTER EXPRESSING HOPE THAT COMMITMENTS OF HIS JUNE 1 SPEECH WILL BE CARRIED OUT IN GOOD FAITH IN LIGHT OF POSITIVE IMPACT THIS COULD HAVE FOR OUR BILATERAL AND ALLIANCE RELATIONSHIPS. HOPE COULD BE EXPRESSED IN CONTEXT OF NEED TO ENSURE PLEBISCITE TAKING PLACE UNDER CONDITIONS OF RELATIVE FREEDOM. OUR THOUGHT WOULD BE THAT IN THIS WAY WE WILL BE IN POSITION IF PLEBISCITE SITUATION DOES NOT EVOLVE SATISFACTORILY TO EXPRESS OUR REGRET AND DISAPPOINTMENT. WE BELIEVE THIS WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR US VIS- A- VIS PUBLIC OPINION IN GREECE, U. S., AND ELSEWHERE; OTHERWISE WE WOULD APPEAR TO BE CLEARLY ASSOCIATED WITH RESULT IN EVENT PLEBISCITE CAREFULLY RIGGED AND MANAGED BY REGIME. FURTHER ADVANTAGE OF SUCH A U. S. APPROACH TO PM NOW WOULD BE TO STRENGTHEN HIS OWN HAND IN DEALING WITH OTHERS WITHIN REGIME IF INDEED HE HAS ANY INTENTION OF CARRYING OUT PLEBISCITE ON GOOD FAITH BASIS. TASCA UNQUOTE RUSH

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